

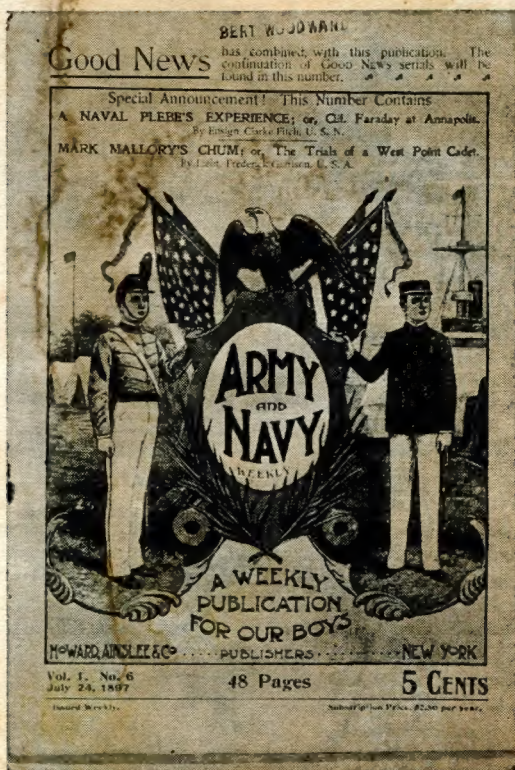
DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

Vol. 33 No. 5

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Whole No. 380



DIME NOVEL SKETCHES NO. 55

ARMY AND NAVY WEEKLY

Published by Street & Smith under the publishing "pseudonym" Howard Ainslee. Patriotically designed colored covers. Lasted 33 issues, June 19, 1897 to January 29, 1898. Featured the adventures of Clif Faraday at Annapolis and Mark Mallory at West Point. The Mark Mallory stories were the first published stories of Upton Sinclair.

Doctor Quartz and Other Nine-Lived Villains

by J. Edward Leithead

Frederic Marmaduke Van Rensselaer Dey originated the "Doctor Quartz" tales, the first series of which was published in Nick Carter Library #13, 3,000 Miles by Freight, or, The Mystery of a Piano Box, #14, The Thirteen's Oath of Vengeance, or, A Criminal Compact and #15, The Fate of Doctor Quartz, or, The Murder in the Dissecting Room.

Doctor Jack Quartz, a criminal skilled as a physician, surgeon and scientist, had a hold on life that would have made him a Class A insurance risk, despite all that the Carter clan—Nick, Chick, Patsy, Ida Jones, Ten-Ichi and Adelina (Patsy Garvan's wife)—could do to put him away permanently, for Quartz made numerous reappearances to menace the famous detective and his official family. His introduction to Nick Carter was through the bizarre piano box murders: a freight car on a siding in the San Francisco railroad yards containing a huge piano box in which, like figures in a wax museum, four persons, two men and two women in formal wear, sat at a table playing cards. The doctor had embalmed them of course before starting them on their ghastly journey from New York City. Nick Carter was called into the case. He had never seen the like before and he was to learn that Quartz was quite original in all his misdeeds.

Doctor Quartz was portrayed as a man of medium height, a bit portly, smooth-shaven, with a not unpleasant manner even when he intended the most harm. He was strong, too, almost as strong as Nick Carter himself, who, from the early days of the Library Dey had called "The Little

Giant." The great detective and the great criminal had considerable respect for each other's mental and physical powers, though on opposite sides of the law.

By all odds, Quartz was the cleverest and most persistent law-breaker in Nick Carter's detective career. Usually he associated himself with some smart woman criminal. The first of these was Zelma, very active in the second series in Nick Carter Library—#17, Nick Carter's Greatest Peril, or, A Prisoner for Life With the Dead, #18, The Great Detective Defied, or, Zelma, the Female Fiend, #19, The Little Giant's Task, or, Nick Carter's Wonderful Nerve and #20, Brought to Bay at Last, or, Outwitted, Outgeneraled and Outdone. There was an isolated Quartz tale in #126 of Nick Carter Library, The Heir of Doctor Quartz, or, Nick Carter's Game of Plots. Just why this is off by itself I do not understand, but it is by Dey. With this single exception, the two Quartz series were reprinted in Nick Carter Library, #13 renumbered 221, #14 renumbered #223, and so on.

A clever bit of business in The Thirteen's Oath of Vengeance was when Nick permitted his enemies, thirteen in number, to gain easy admittance to his house and trapped all of them on the main staircase with the balustrade wired for an electric shock that stopped them dead in their tracks. The first three stories in the Quartz series were reprinted in Magnet Library #17, The Piano Box Mystery, again reprinted in New Magnet #960. I have never been able to locate the second series in Magnet though it may be there. And also that loner, The Heir

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of Doctor Quartz, paired off with some tale not involving the doctor and giving no clue to its hiding-place in the Magnet re-titling.

Eight original Quartz tales had been printed twice in Nick Carter Library, and Dey brought him to life twice in the color cover Nick Carter Weekly. The first new Quartz series in the Weekly began with #413, Doctor Quartz, the Second, or, The Great Freight Car Mystery. This case begins in the Kansas City railroad yards, where a freight car is found to contain dead people posed like figures in a wax museum; when Nick Carter sees it, he knows it as the trade-mark of his old enemy, long thought to be dead, Doctor Jack Quartz. The pursuit begins; it lasts through #414, Doctor Quartz, the Second, at Bay, or, A Man of Iron Nerve, #415 The Great Hotel Murders, or, Doctor Quartz's Quick Move, #416, Zanoni, the Woman Wizard, or, The Ward of Doctor Quartz, #417, The Woman Wizard's Hate, or, A Dangerous Foe, #418, The Prison Demon, or, The Ghost of Doctor Quartz, #419, Nick Carter and the Hangman's Noose, or, Doctor Quartz on Earth Again, #420, Doctor Quartz' Last Play, or, A Hand With a Royal Flush, #421, Zanoni, the Transfigured, or, Nick Carter's Phantom Mascot.

Early in the game of hide-and-seek Nick runs the doctor down; he is tried for murder and sentenced to be hanged. The hanging takes place in the walled courtyard of the Kansas State pen; Quartz is laid aside for burial. A lank Missourian, himself wanted by the law, makes away with the body. There is life in it, he nurses the doctor back to health; and as a token of Quartz's gratitude, dies by his own gun in the doctor's hand. As the ghost of the departed Quartz, the doctor kept the penitentiary in an uproar and had the warden and the guards almost stampeded.

Zanoni, Quartz's associate in this series—or ward, so-called—fell in love with Nick (as did many shady ladies before and after her). Strangely enough, Zanoni's tender passion bud-

did forth at a time when Nick was not himself. Under the influence of a drug administered by Quartz, he thought he was another man, a wealthy invalid, and that Zanoni was his wife. The detective treated her with such deference and affection while doped up that Zanoni's better nature was aroused (this, she thought, is what might have been), much to the chagrin of Doctor Quartz. The Doctor was traveling with them as the "invalid's" personal physician, their destination an island in the Pacific, where Quartz would be "master of all he surveyed" and charitably planned to dissect Nick alive, for the detective was the finest physical specimen Quartz had ever encountered.

Chick Carter and Patsy Garvan followed the criminal doctor's private yacht across the Pacific to the little-known island and saved their chief from the tortures of vivisection. Zanoni, unable to return to her old life through love of Nick, leaped into the sea. But she turned up again; and so did the infamous Jack Quartz. This excellent series was reprinted in Magnet Library #442, From a Prison Cell, #444, Doctor Quartz, Magician, and #450, Doctor Quartz's Quick Move. All were reprinted again in the higher numbers of New Magnet, #1122, 1123 and 1176.

Doctor Quartz was supposed to have died on that island in the Pacific; nothing was heard from him for a long time. But in #692, Doctor Quartz, Again, or, Nick Carter's Shrewdest Opponent, Dey resurrected the rascal. In that and the five succeeding issues Nick and his staff were pitted against the same wily Quartz surrounded by a new set of lawbreakers: #693, The Famous Case of Doctor Quartz, or, Nick Carter's Most Subtle Foe, #694, The Chemical Clue, or, Nick Carter in Pursuit of Doctor Quartz, #695, The Prison Cipher, or, Nick Carter Tracing a Mysterious Decoy, #696, A Pupil of Doctor Quartz, or, Nick Carter's Accidental Clue (Gaston Dupont, a French crook, a sort of Arsene Lupin, was the apt

pupil), #697, *The Midnight Visitor*, or, Nick Carter's Teasing Mystery.

Nobody was more astonished than Nick Carter to be called in to investigate a murder and find what seemed a clue indicating that Jack Quartz hadn't perished on the island of evil memory but was very much alive. He knew Quartz, for all his deviltry, was a twisted devotee of beauty in both animate and inanimate things. The butt of a cigar resting on an exquisite hand-painted tray not intended as an ash tray was carefully balanced so that the lighted end wouldn't mar the art work.

"There is only one man I can think of," Nick Carter said, "who would be so careful of that small but beautiful tray, yet would kill a man or a woman or half a dozen of them without a qualm; but that man simply cannot be alive. I mean Doctor Jack Quartz, Chick!"

But alive he was as dead as ever. These stories in the Weekly were reprinted in New Magnet #747, Nick Carter's Subtle Foe and #749, Nick Carter's Chance Clue, reprinted again in New Magnet #1279 and #1280.

Next time the doctor was heard from it was through a series of reprints from the Library and the Weekly itself, with a footnote to each story: "Reprinted by request." Here are the titles, some altered but recognizable, and while the stories were the same the cover illustrations all were new, most of them by F. A. Carter, one or two by Robert Emmett Owen:

#779—Doctor Quartz, or, The Mystery of a Piano Box.

780—Doctor Quartz's Oath, or, Nick Carter and the Criminal Compact.

781—The Fate of Doctor Quartz, or, Nick Carter and the Dissecting Room Murder.

782—A Woman's Stratagem, or, Nick Carter's Boomerang Trail.

783—The Cliff Castle Affair, or, Nick Carter's Quickest Change.

784—A Prisoner of the Tomb, or, Nick Carter's Greatest Peril.

785—A Resourceful Foe, or, Nick Carter Defied.

786—The Heir of Doctor Quartz, or, Nick Carter's Game of Plots.

787—Doctor Quartz, the Second, or, Nick Carter and the Freight Car Mystery.

788—Doctor Quartz II at Bay, or, Nick Carter's Conflict With Iron Nerve.

789—The Great Hotel Tragedies, or, Nick Carter's Dangerous Pursuit.

790—Zanoni, the Witch, or, Nick Carter Baffled by Shadows.

791—A Vengeful Sorceress, or, Nick Carter's Message from the Dead.

792—The Prison Demon, or, Nick Carter and Dr. Quartz's Ghost.

793—Doctor Quartz on Earth Again, or, Nick Carter and the Hangman's Noose.

794—Doctor Quartz's Last Play, or, Nick Carter's Perilous Plight.

795—Zanoni, the Transfigured, or, Nick Carter's Phantom Mascot.

If you want to read the very last three stories about Nick and Quartz (new stories, but I do not know by whom) you will have to locate three far back numbers of Detective Story Magazine. The issue for Dec. 11, 1926, contained the novelette, *Doctor Quartz Returns*—from the Archives of Nicholas Carter, and the cover of the magazine shows Nick staring at a weird, luminous "Q" shining through the darkness of the room in which he stands; Dec. 25, Nick Carter Corners Doctor Quartz; January 22, 1927, Nick Carter's Danger Trail. Exciting and up-to-date tales. Nick and Quartz slightly older, naturally. These are the only Quartz tales not written by Fred Dey. But all the familiar names and faces are there—Nick, Chick, Pat-sy and Ida Jones (Ten-Ichi, a son of the Mikado, had gone back to Japan). During the early part of 1927, three other Nick Carter novelettes were published in Detective Story Magazine—Nick Carter and the Shadow Woman, Nick Carter and the Black Cat, and Nick Carter Dies—but these weren't Quartz tales. At last accounts, the crafty doctor was on his way to the electric chair.

Richard Wormser, who wrote the

80-page-long Nick Carter novels (and good ones they were, in my opinion) in the 10c Nick Carter Magazine in the 1930's, might have revived Doctor Quartz in new crimes and settings but didn't. However, he brought back Nick Carter, Chick, Patsy, the circus-trained girl detective Roxy, who in early issues of Nick Carter Weekly had attended Nick's detective school, and Con Connors, the Secret Service man from Washington. Beginning with *Marked for Death* and ending with *The Devil's Handbook*, there were forty of these complete novels by Wormser.

The "Dazaar" series by Mr. Dey were second only in importance to the mysteries involving Doctor Quartz. Dazaar, at the outset, was apparently a Tibetan Lama or priest from "that mysterious country lying north of India." But Nick Carter, before Dazaar had eluded him in their initial encounter, found "him" to be well schooled in deviltry and crime. The quotes are to indicate that Dazaar in the final run-down, which did not occur for some time, proved to be a woman, a Russian "princess" named Irma Plavatski, and so beautiful in her proper person that Nick wondered how she had ever fooled him in the first place. Two reasons were perfect disguise and acting ability of the highest degree; and a third one the fact that Irma had trained six other persons to assume the role of Dazaar when the law was breathing down her pretty neck. By this artifice she confounded Nick and his assistants for many issues of *New Nick Carter Weekly*; each time they thought they had the real Dazaar it was only one of her stand-ins.

That Nick didn't know he was looking for a woman was partly the cause of his bafflement. It made exciting reading, and the reader, as tenacious on the trail as Nick himself, wasn't let in on the secret that "Dazaar" was a woman for some time. Murder by radium, inserted in the sweatband of hats worn by her male victims, was a new form of murder invented by Dazaar. And she was not above

employing that ancient device of torture, "The Iron Maiden"—a coffin-like box provided with iron spikes of needle sharpness, top and bottom. Ten-ichi, Nick Carter's Japanese assistant, narrowly escaped death in the embrace of "The Iron Maiden" when Nick crashed (literally, smashing an unguarded window) the house of Dazaar in the first story. All the cover illustrations of this series were hair-raisers, by Marmaduke Russell and Edward Johnson.

The original Dazaar series included six stories:

#372—Dazaar, the Arch Fiend, or, The House of the Seven Devils.

373—The Queen of the Seven, or, Nick Carter and the Beautiful Sorceress.

374—The Sign of the Dagger, or, The Crime Without a Name.

375—The Devil Worshipers, or, The Defiance of Dazaar.

376—The Cross of Daggers, or, In the Lair of the Devil Worshipers.

377—The Last of the Seven, or, The Confessions of Dazar.

In #377, Irma Plavatski confesses to being the real Dazar, following her arrest. But did that end her predacious career? Not much! Dazaar came back in #394, *A Princess of Hades, or, The Reappearance of Dazaar, the Fiend*, #395, *A Compact With Dazaar, or, The Devil Worshiper's Den* and #396, *In the Shadow of Dazaar, or, At the Mercy of Vampires*, continuing Nick's detective adventures with this remarkable menace. #396 marked the end of the contest, but Nick's triumph at the last was darkened by tragedy, the murder of his beloved wife. Ethel Carter, nee Dalton, had been in the first Nick Carter tale by John R. Coryell—*The Old Detective's Pupil*, a *New York Weekly* serial beginning Sept. 18, 1886 reprinted *Magnet* #10 and *New Magnet* #954—and she was occasionally mentioned thereafter. Her death by violence occurred in 1904, and afterward Nick employed housekeepers to manage his Madison Avenue home, first a Mrs. Clawson, then a Mrs. Peters. Joseph, Nick's butler, was a

well-known figure in stories by Dey. The Carters had two sons, mentioned, so far as I know, only the once in the introduction to *The Crime of a Countess*, or, *The American Detective* and the *Russian Nihilist* (a New York Weekly serial, reprinted Magnet #5, New Magnet #942, and probably by Coryell), "I Nick Carter, 'sat in my library one afternoon, pretending to read, but in reality watching the frolic of my two boys with a young man who lay sprawled on the floor.'" The young man was Wat Denton, a detective who appeared in a previous N. Y. Weekly serial, *A Titled Counterfeiter*, reprinted Magnet #3 and New Magnet #931. A gentleman is ushered in, seeking Nick's aid in a case, but the latter turns the client over to Denton and concludes the introduction thus, "'And, except to write what follows'—it was one of those tales with the by-line 'Nicholas Carter'—'I never had anything more to do with the case of the man who wanted a detective who was an American and yet could speak Russian like a native.'"

(to be continued)

EXCERPTS FROM LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Mr. LeBlanc: I am writing to see if you have old story books by Charlotte M. Braeme. I would like to get some if they are not too expensive as I cannot afford to pay too much. I love to read. I am a shut-in.—Mrs. John W. Brown, RR1, Wolfville, N. S., Canada.

Dear Eddie: Gilbert Patten's autobiography, "Frank Merriwell's Father" is scheduled to appear in July of this year. The book is edited by Harriet Hinsdale and assisted by Tony London. It is to be illustrated and will cost \$5.95, published by the University of Oklahoma Press.—Stanley A. Pachon.

Dear Mr. LeBlanc: The novels you sent me brought nostalgic memories

of my youth on lower East Side of New York City, where every red-blooded boy read these books, often tabooed by teacher and parents. And when I see the pornographic literature of today, which cannot escape the eyes of boys and compare the material in those old books, truly it was an age of innocence for us kids.—C. Henry Schulze, Savoy Hotel, 1214 2nd Ave., Seattle, Wash.

Dear Mr. LeBlanc: I am glad you raised the subscription rate; it was not fair for you to publish the Round-up at a loss. I would appreciate hearing from anyone having the following items: *Fame and Fortune* #27 and 181; *Pluck and Luck* #834; *Beadles Dime Library* #477; *Secret Service* #189 and 221; *Brave and Bold* #418 and *Old Cap Collier* #723. I hope to locate more Nebraska titles for the Historical Society.—W. R. Johnson, 1508 6th Ave., S. W., Ardmore, Okla. (Mr. Johnson collects novels about oil and those with a Nebraska locale.)

Dear Mr. Leithead: I have been reading your articles in the Round-up for quite some time, and enjoy them very much. The dime novels came before my time and I would say that I was fortunate when I found one and read it. If these old novels will ever be sought after the way they should be, I'll never know. Except for museums and universities, there does not seem to be a demand for them, at least not here in Milwaukee.—Frank Schott.

Dear Mr. LeBlanc: I am working on a biography of George Munro and a bibliography of the Seaside Library, which I hope to have ready for publication in a year or two. If you have any information about George or his brother Norman I will certainly appreciate anything you can pass on to me.—Raymond H. Shove, 87 Orlin Av., S. E., Minneapolis, Minn.

Dear Ed: The Round-up gets more interesting as I grow older because it is a link with the America of the 19th century.—John P. Ball, Chicago, Ill.

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

222. Brooklyn Public Library, Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn, N. Y. 11238
 219. Haverford College Library, Haverford, Pa. 19041 (New member)
 220. John M. Burke, 3950 20th St., San Francisco, Calif. (New member)
 74. Ross R. DeVean, 7042 Goodview Ave., Riverside, Calif. (Change of Add.)
 221. State Univ. of New York, A & T Institute, Morrisville, N. Y. (New mem.)
 41. Charles J. Duprez, Bldg. 95 A-1 South, State Hospital, Central Islip, N. Y. (New address)
 42. Capt. Frank C. Acker, 375 Lloyd Ave., Apt. 3B, Providence, R. I. (New address)

Dear Ed: Has the latest issue come out yet? I look forward to these issues (Dime Novel Round-Up) each month.—Melvin J. Nichols, Summit, N. J.

Dear Ed: I do hope that all the members on the list will retain their membership for another year. I realize that we are all getting along in years. I am 71. Every year it seems that one or more pass on which is always a sad thing. I was sorry to hear of the passing of Bill Burns. We had some pleasant dealings in the past and he will be missed.—George Sahr, Kenosha, Wis.

Dear Ed: One thing you might do is get new authors for the Round-up. They would give the Round-up new stance. But this is something that would cost much money since authors expect some recompense.—Ralph Adimari, Mt. Vernon, N. Y. (Ed. note: Anyone wish to take up Mr. Adimari's challenge and write an article for the Round-up? Recompense necessarily would have to be in sincere appreciation.

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